

ALI BABA and the Forty Thieves



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ALI BABA and the Forty Thieves

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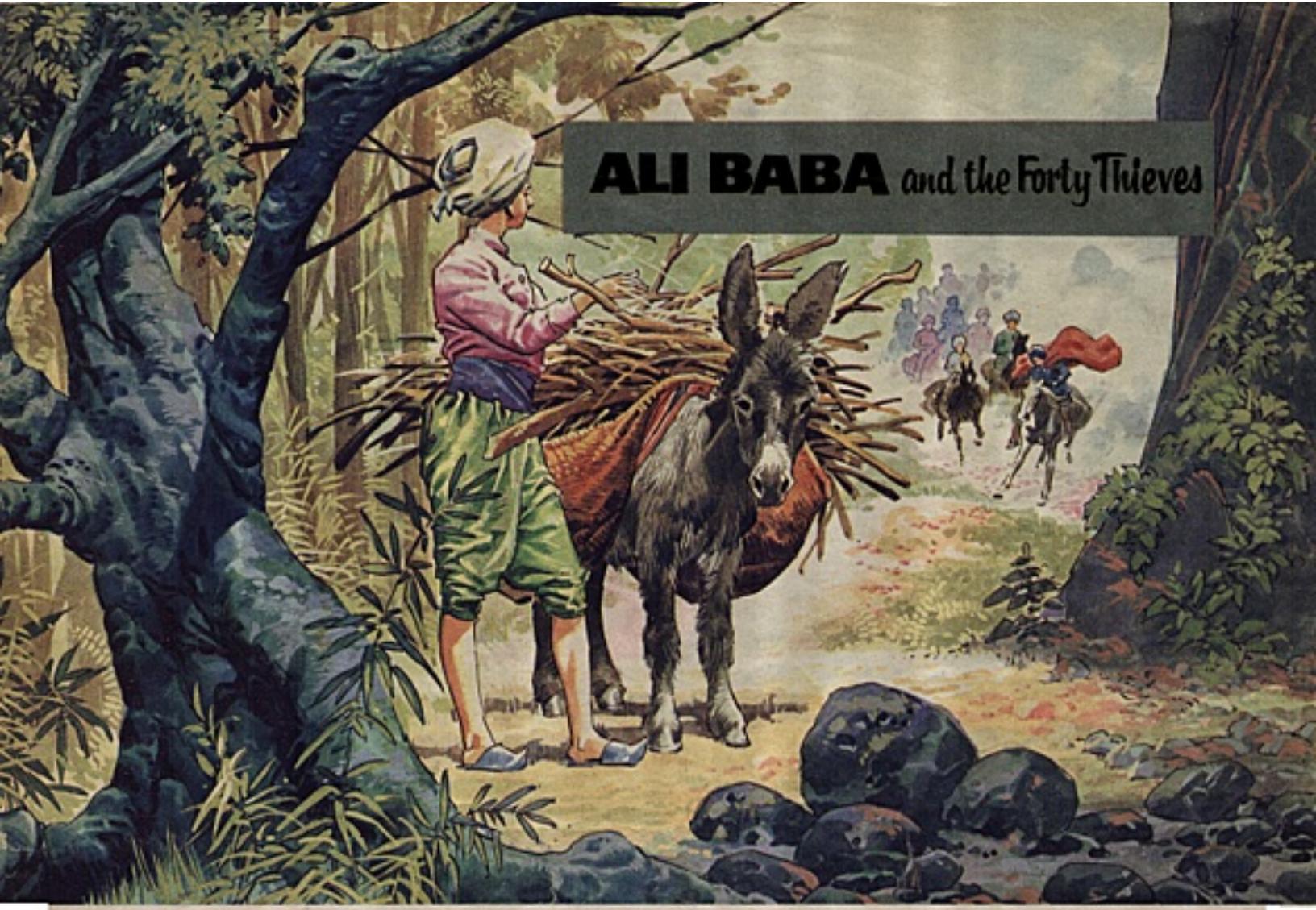
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Content

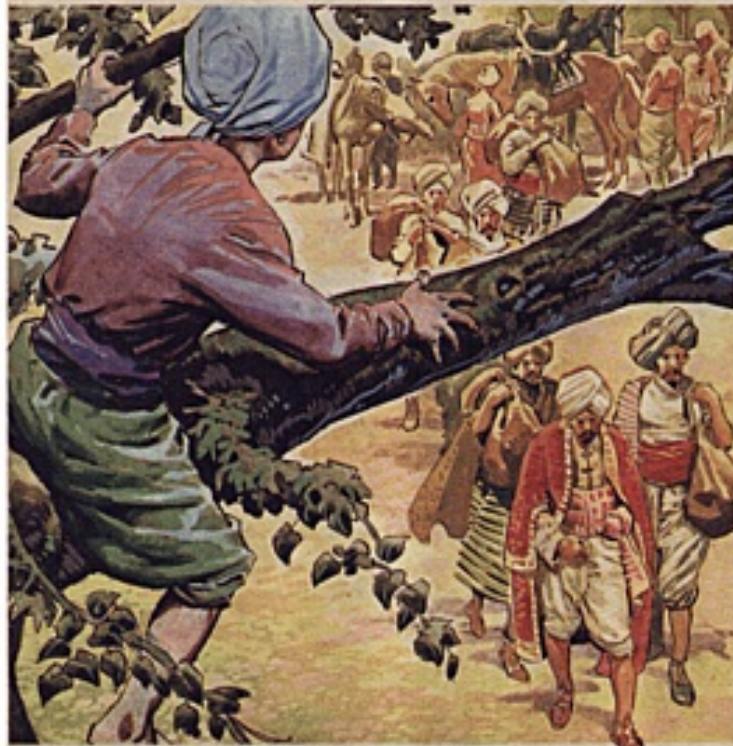
18 pages Once upon a time
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ALI BABA and the Forty Thieves



1. In a certain town of Persia there once lived a woodcutter whose name was Ali Baba. Although they were very poor Ali Baba and his wife were happy together and each morning Ali Baba set off with his donkey to the forest to gather wood to sell.



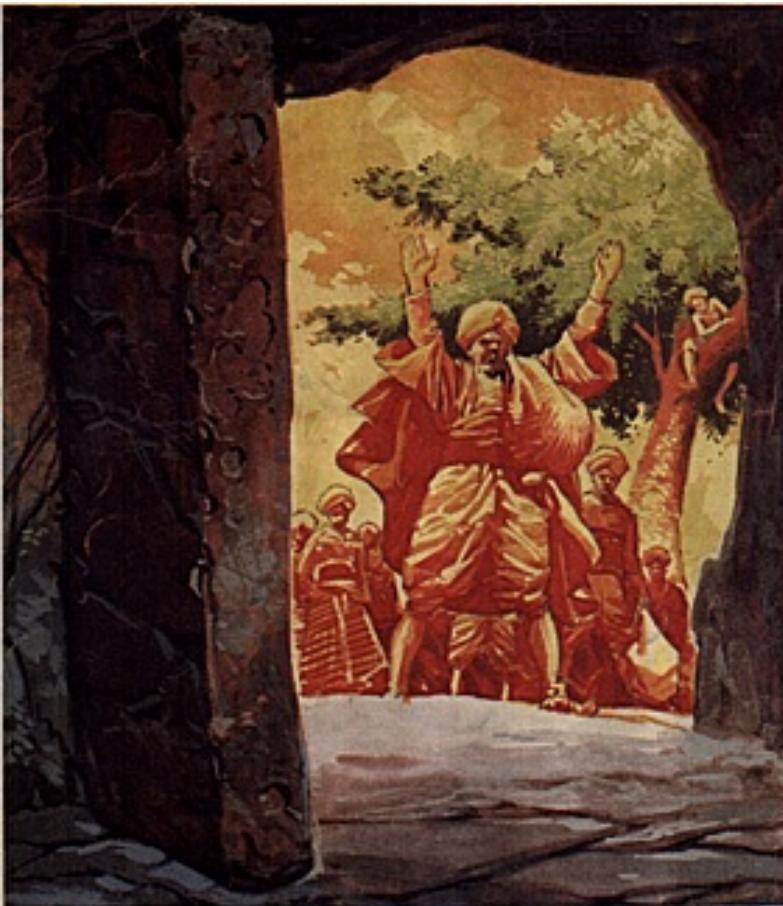
3. Ali Baba was a brave man, but for safety he climbed a tree and watched as the horsemen halted close to where he was hidden.

2. One day when he reached the forest Ali Baba saw a cloud of dust rising high into the air. As he watched he realised the dust was made by a company of horsemen who were galloping towards him.

"Could they be robbers?" he wondered.



4. The forty horsemen were indeed robbers. From their saddles they took bags of gold and followed their leader to a huge rock.



5. The robber leader was big and strong, with a cruel-looking face. Hardly daring to breathe, Ali Baba watched him as he faced the great rock and said in a commanding voice: "Open, Sesame!" No sooner had he spoken than a startling thing happened. Part of the rock opened and swung inwards like a huge door.



6. One by one the forty thieves passed through the open door and into a deep cave in the rock. The last to enter was the leader and as soon as he was inside the door closed behind him. After it had closed no one could have told that it existed, for the rock appeared to be completely solid again.

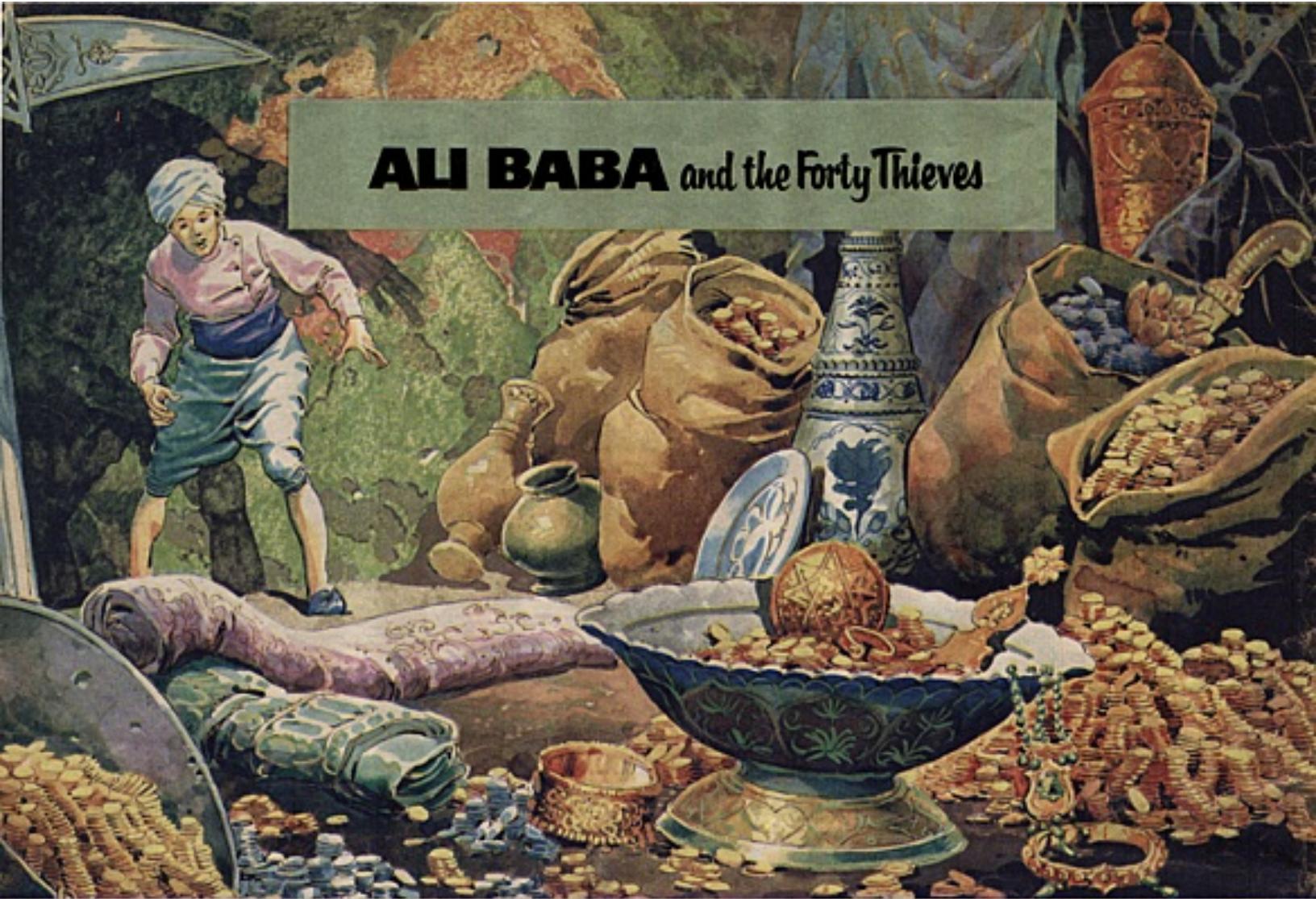


7. At last the robbers came out and the chief said to the rock: "Shut, Sesame!" The door closed tight and the robbers rode away.



8. After a while, Ali Baba went to the great rock and uttered the words: "Open, Sesame!" At once the door in the rock flew open!

ALI BABA and the Forty Thieves



1. Just as he had seen the robber chieftain do, Ali Baba faced the solid-seeming rock and uttered the words: "Open, Sesame!" At once a great door in the rock flew open and Ali Baba went into a great secret cave. As he stepped inside, the door closed behind him with a thud, but Ali Baba scarcely heard it.

2. He was gasping with surprise at what he saw in the treasure cave. Diamonds and rubies glittered from open chests, gold and silver spilled from over-filled bags, beautiful ornaments littered the floor and rich silks were heaped all around.



3. Ali Baba could never hope to find the real owners of this treasure. Being poor, he thought he should have a little of it, so he filled a bag with golden coins.



4. "Open, Sesame!" he said when he had finished. The door swung open and Ali Baba stepped out. "Shut, Sesame!" he said, and the door obeyed and closed as Ali Baba loaded the bag of gold on to his donkey.



5. Never before had Ali Baba possessed more than a few shillings at one time and he hurried home to tell his wife of his good fortune. "We must hide this gold," decided his wife. "But first we must see how much it is by using a measuring cup, borrowed from your brother's wife."



6. Ali Baba's brother, Cassim, was a greedy person and so was his wife. Ali Baba's wife went to borrow the measuring cup, but said nothing about the gold.



7. Cassim's wife, however, was very curious about it. "I will find out what they want to measure," she said. She lit a candle and then cunningly allowed some of the wax to drip into the cup.



8. Not aware of this, Ali Baba and his wife used the borrowed cup to measure the gold. They did not notice that one of the gold coins became stuck to the candle wax. (More of Ali Baba next week.)

ALI BABA and the Forty Thieves



1. After finding the secret cave of the forty thieves, Ali Baba was rich. First he and his wife measured the amount of gold coins in a measuring cup and then Ali Baba dug a hole behind his house. "We will hide the golden treasure," he said.

2. When the gold coins were safely hidden, Ali Baba's wife hurried back to the house of Ali Baba's brother, Cassim, to return the measuring cup she had borrowed. Of course, she had not told Cassim's wife what it was she wished to measure.



3. But Cassim's wife, always anxious to know other people's business, had pressed a piece of candle-wax into the bottom of the measuring cup. And now, stuck to the candle-wax she found a gold coin. Excitedly, she showed it to her husband.

4. Knowing that Ali Baba was always poor, Cassim wondered how he had come to measure gold. "You must tell me all, brother," he said, after he had hurried to Ali Baba's house. Ali Baba told him of the cave which opened at the magic words "Open, Sesame."



5. Cassim was a wealthy man, but was not content with all the riches he had. Ever greedy for more, he set off with three mules carrying baskets into which he intended to load the treasure from the secret cave of the forty thieves.



6. He reached the great rock and stood before it. "Open, Sesame!" he commanded eagerly. No sooner had he uttered the magic words than a part of the rock swung open like a huge door to reveal a vast cave. "How wonderful," said Cassim.



7. As he stepped inside, the door silently closed behind him, but Cassim had only eyes for the treasure in the cave. With great haste he began to fill bag after bag with handfuls of gleaming gold coins—enough to satisfy even his greedy heart.



8. But when he was ready to leave, he found that the dazzling sight of the treasure had caused him to forget the magic words to open the door. "Open—er—barley! Open—er—maize!" he said, but the door remained shut.

(More next week.)

ALI BABA and the Forty Thieves



1. Trapped inside the treasure cave of the Forty Thieves, Ali Baba's greedy brother Cassim tried again and again to remember the magic words Ali Baba had told him—the only words which had the power to open the door of solid rock.

2. But nothing Cassim said made the great door even start to open. There was no other way out of the robbers' cave and Cassim knew that he was a hopeless prisoner. "Open! Open! Please open!" he wept, beating his fists against the rock.



3. Not knowing that anyone had discovered their secret, the Forty Thieves were returning to the cave. With them they brought much gold, which they had gained by robbing rich merchants. They planned to put it in the cave with the rest.



4. But when they reached the spot they saw Cassim's mules with empty baskets. "What means this?" roared the robber chief. "Can it be that someone is within the cave? If that is so, whoever has learned our secret will not pass it on."



5. "Open, Sesame!" the robber-chief commanded. These were the magic words Cassim had failed to remember. The great door opened and Cassim was revealed inside the cave. He trembled with fright as the eyes of the forty thieves fixed upon him.



6. Cassim had not returned home by the following day, so his anxious wife went to Ali Baba and confessed that her greedy husband had gone to the secret cave, intending to load mules with gold. "Please find out what has happened to him," she asked.



7. Ali Baba had a kind heart and though he was unhappy to learn of his brother's greed, he promised to help. And so he once again set off with his donkey for the cave of the Forty Thieves. "If Cassim is there I will find him," he said.

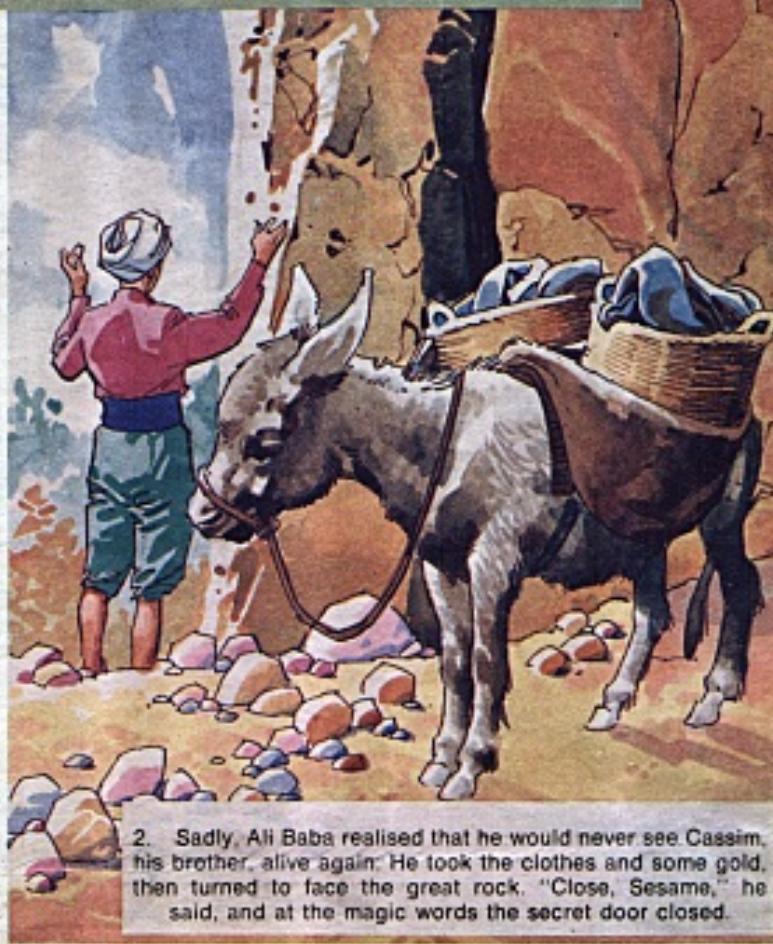


8. Ali Baba searched the great rock but there was no sign of Cassim. "Perhaps I should look inside the cave," he thought. As the robber-chief had done, he faced the wall of rock. "Open, Sesame!" he said firmly, and the rock began to open.

ALI BABA and the Forty Thieves



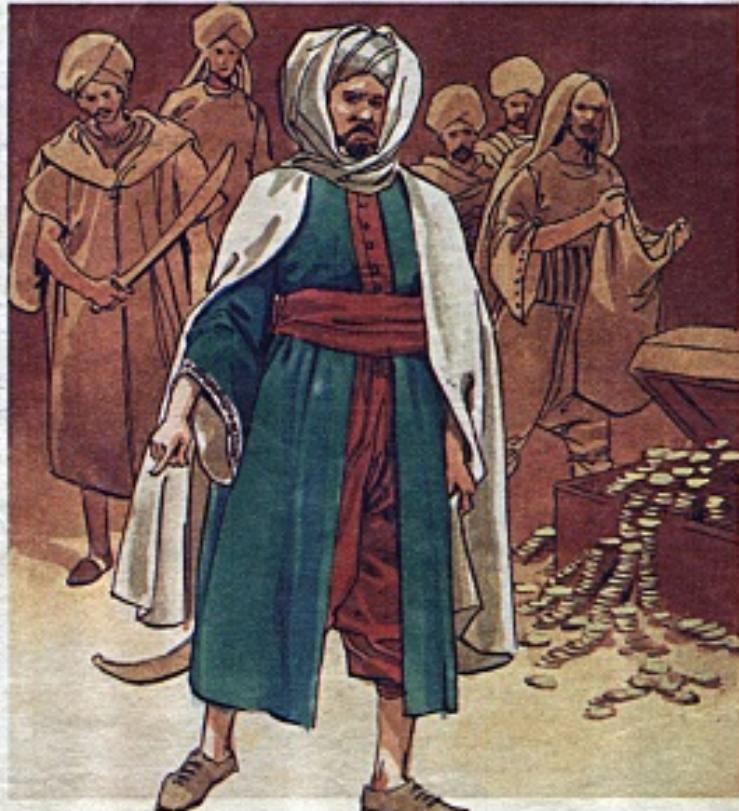
1. When Ali Baba went once again to the cave of the Forty Thieves, he found only Cassim's clothes and a note saying, "These are all that remain of the one who entered."



2. Sadly, Ali Baba realised that he would never see Cassim, his brother, alive again. He took the clothes and some gold, then turned to face the great rock. "Close, Sesame," he said, and at the magic words the secret door closed.



3. When Ali Baba returned home, Cassim's wife was heart-broken. "You must come and live with us," said Ali Baba, very kindly.



4. A few days later, the Forty Thieves visited their secret cave and soon saw that Cassim's clothes and some gold had disappeared.

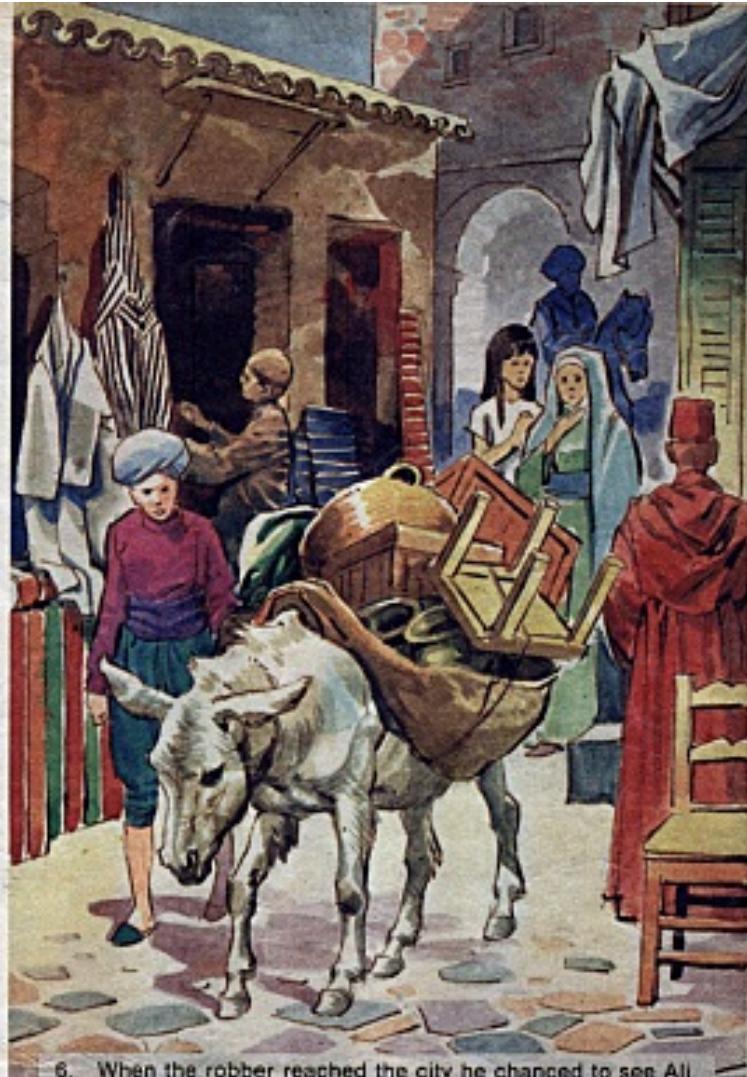


5. "It seems that the man we caught in the cave was not the only one who knows our secret," frowned the robber chieftain. "One of us must go to the city to try and discover who knows the man we captured here. It must be done with cunning and skill, so as not to betray ourselves." One of them set off.



7. The old man explained that the weeping woman's husband had suddenly and mysteriously disappeared a few days before. When he heard this the robber grew thoughtful. "If her husband disappeared so mysteriously, he must have been the man I and my comrades discovered in our secret treasure cave," he thought to himself. "It seems I have found the answer very easily."

More of this exciting story of Ali Baba in next week's "Once Upon A Time".



6. When the robber reached the city he chanced to see Ali Baba and his wife and Cassim's wife. The three of them had decided to move to Cassim's house. The robber saw that Cassim's wife was weeping bitterly and asked an old man the reason for it.



8. Taking care not to be seen, the robber followed Ali Baba and the two women through the twisting streets to Cassim's house. He watched them enter, and after dark, when the street was quiet, he crept forward and made a mark on the door. "Now I shall know the house again," he smiled to himself. "I can lead the chieftain to it and we will capture the other man who knows our secret cave."

ALI BABA and the Forty Thieves



1. Well pleased with himself at finding the house where Ali Baba was living, the robber returned to where the rest of the Forty Thieves were waiting. "It will be easy for us to find the house again," he told the robber chieftain, "for I have made a mark upon the door." "Well done," said the robber chieftain.



2. But in the city, the serving-maid of Cassim's house, where Ali Baba was now living, was returning from shopping. Her name was Morgiana and she was a clever girl. "What a strange mark is now on the door," she thought to herself, "I am sure it was not there when I set out to do my shopping. What does it mean?"



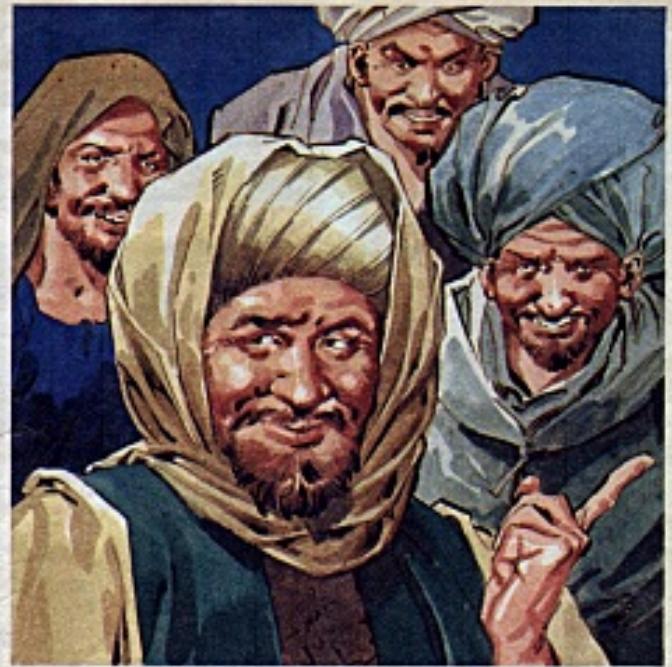
3. Morgiana wondered if someone had put the mark on the door to bring trouble to Ali Baba. So, with a piece of chalk, she made a similar mark upon every door in the street. All looked alike.



4. Later that day, the robber brought the chief and two others to the city, to kill poor Ali Baba. "This is the street where he lives," he said. "Now we must look for the mark on the door."



5. But when they entered the street they found to their great surprise that there was a mark upon every door. "What is this all about?" demanded the robber chieftain. "You told me that only one door was marked and that it would be easy to find the house of the stranger who visited our secret cave." "I—I do not understand," stammered the robber who had put the chalk mark on the door. "I only made one mark, and now there are so many."



6. The robber chieftain thought swiftly. "This is the street where the wealthy merchants live," he said to the puzzled robber. "And yet you tell me that the man you followed to one of these houses was very poorly dressed. That gives me an idea. If he is now rich with the gold that he took from our cave, he will soon be buying new clothes and have no use for his old rags. And this is the one thing that will help us to capture him quickly."



7. The next day, the cunning leader of the Forty Thieves came with a barrow, which he pushed through Ali Baba's street. "Old rags! Old clothes!" he called out. "Who wants to get rid of ragged old clothes?" But none of the rich people who lived there came to their doors, for their clothes were all costly and new. But one door DID open. Now that they were rich, Ali Baba's wife had bought new clothes for herself and her husband and so she gave the old clothes away to the robber chieftain. "Good! This is the house I am looking for," chuckled the delighted robber chieftain.

What will happen to Ali Baba? More of this tale next week.

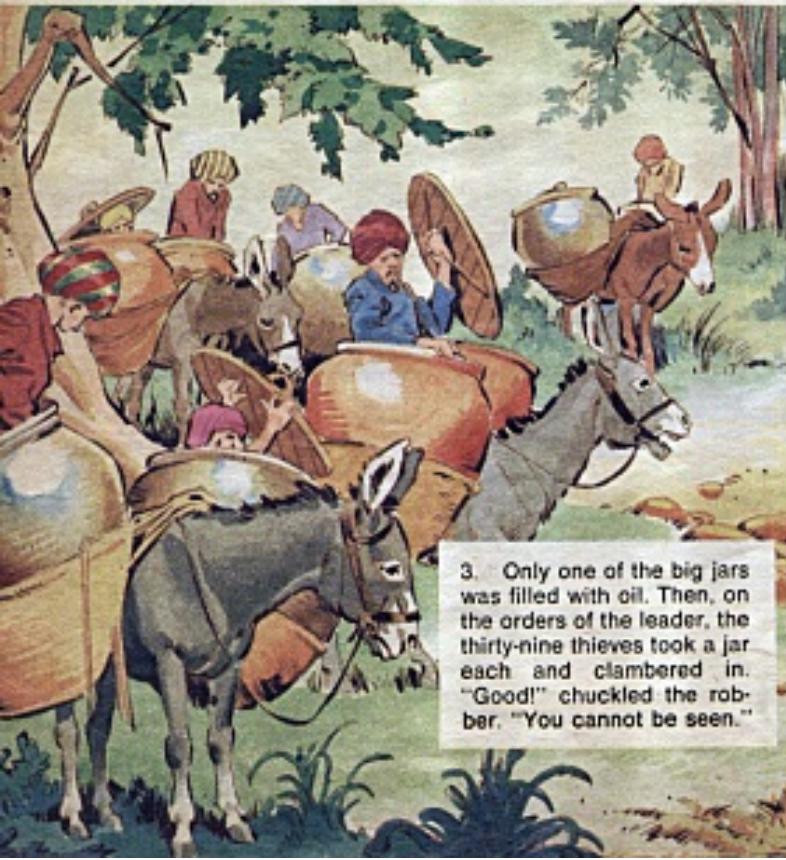


ALI BABA and the Forty Thieves

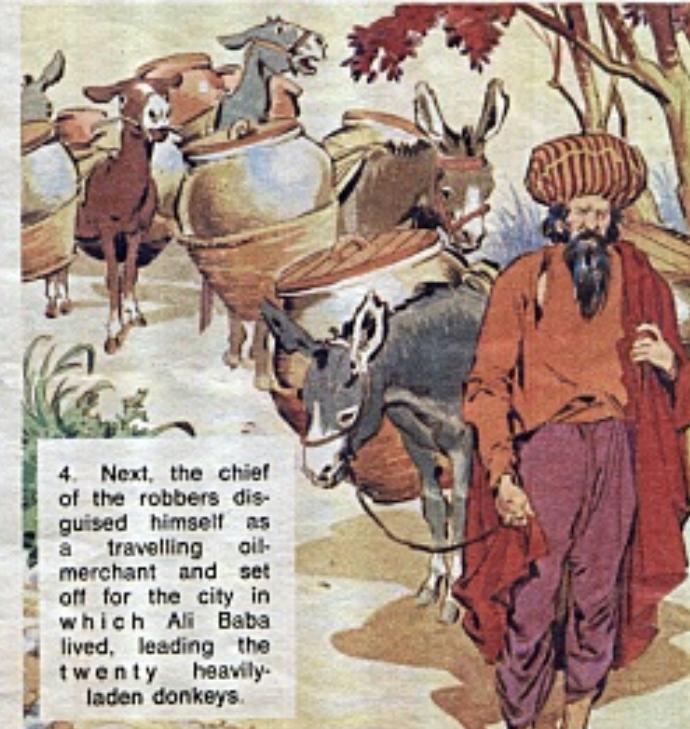


1. By a clever trick, pretending to be a dealer in old clothes, the leader of the forty thieves had discovered the house where Ali Baba lived. "Excellent!" he chuckled and he hurried back to where the other thirty-nine thieves were waiting for him in the forest. "Listen carefully and do what I tell you," he said.

2. Some time later, the robbers returned to their chief and now they had with them twenty donkeys and forty big jars, the kind of jars which in those olden days were used for storing oil. "Now for the next part of my plan," smiled the robber chieftain. "It will be a sure way for us to catch the man who knows about our cave."



3. Only one of the big jars was filled with oil. Then, on the orders of the leader, the thirty-nine thieves took a jar each and clambered in. "Good!" chuckled the robber. "You cannot be seen."



4. Next, the chief of the robbers disguised himself as a travelling oil-merchant and set off for the city in which Ali Baba lived, leading the twenty heavily-laden donkeys.



5. Knowing that Ali Baba might possibly have seen him near the secret cave, the robber chief was careful to put on a long false beard. When he knocked at Ali Baba's door he was not recognised. "I have come far today," sighed the chief. "Would you give me shelter for the night?" "You are welcome to stay as my guest," answered Ali Baba.



6. "Thank you, good sir," said the cunning chieftain. "I will see that you get your proper reward." "There is no need for that," said Ali Baba, who was very good-natured. He ordered a servant to help unload the oil jars from the donkeys. "The jars will be safe in my courtyard and the donkeys may spend the night in my stables and get a good rest," said Ali Baba—and this was just what the clever robber chief had planned.



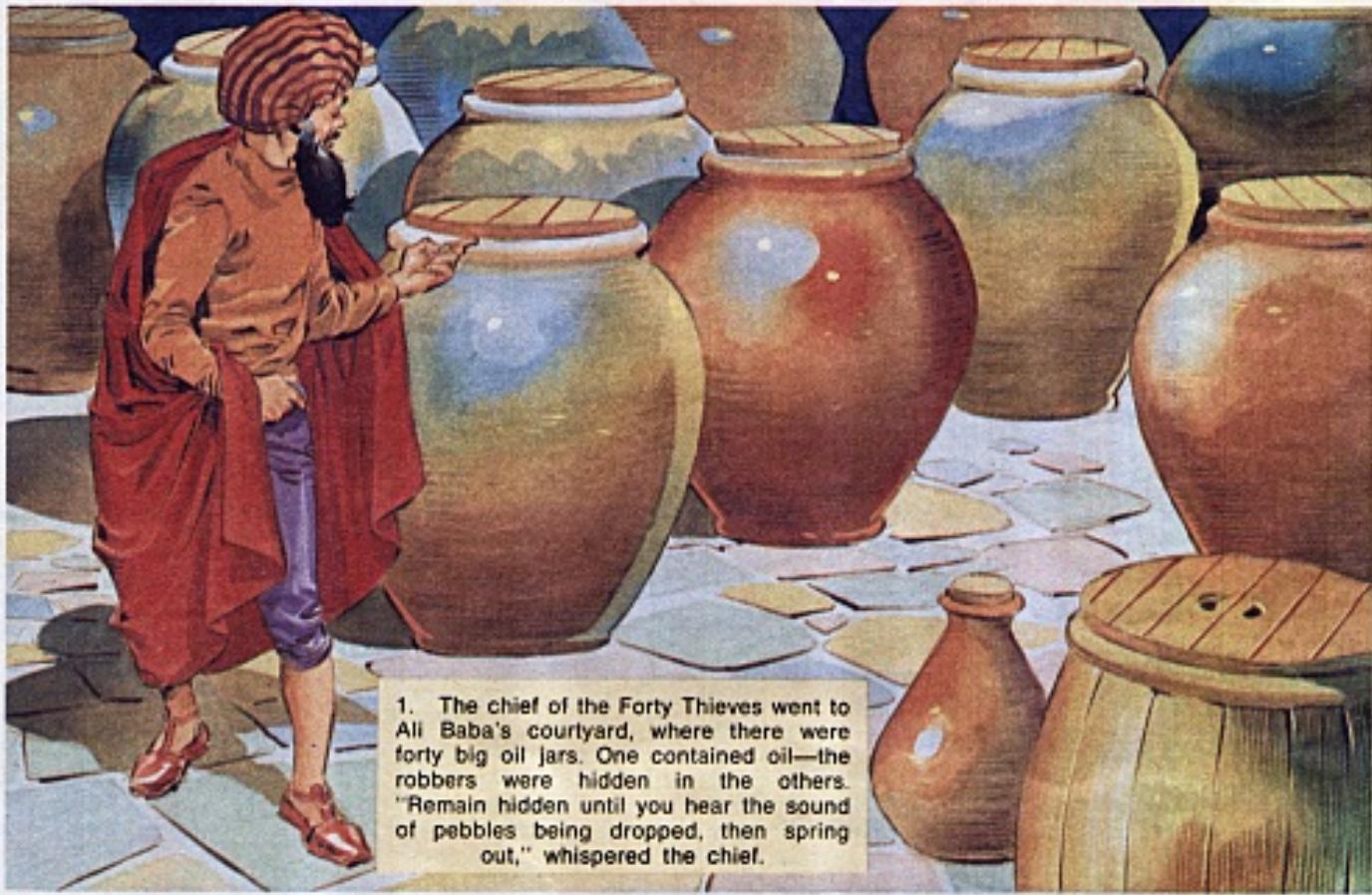
7. Because he was a man who never thought badly of anyone, Ali Baba did not suspect that his guest was anything other than an oil-merchant, such as he appeared to be. And so, after the donkeys had been stabled, Ali Baba ordered a splendid meal to be prepared for himself and the bearded stranger. "You are most welcome to share my home," he said.



8. When the meal was over, the robber chieftain made a pretence of being very grateful to Ali Baba. "You are a man of kind thoughts," he said. "And now I must be like yourself and spare a kind thought for my hard-working donkeys. It is my wish to make sure that they are comfortable for the night." Excusing himself thus, the chief hurried out. But he went into the courtyard and not to the stables. "When you hear pebbles dropping that is the signal to attack," he whispered to his hidden men.

Will the Forty Thieves' plot succeed? More of this lovely story next week.

ALI BABA and the Forty Thieves



1. The chief of the Forty Thieves went to Ali Baba's courtyard, where there were forty big oil jars. One contained oil—the robbers were hidden in the others. "Remain hidden until you hear the sound of pebbles being dropped, then spring out," whispered the chief.



2. Ali Baba had told his servants to give his guest attention and comfort. And so Morgiana, the maid-servant, showed the so-called oil-trader into a splendid bedroom. "You should be able to sleep well in here, sir," she told the cunning chief.



3. Morgiana returned to the kitchen to finish her work, but soon the light from her lamp began to grow dim. But when she fetched the oil bottle she found it empty. Without light she would not be able to work.



4. Then Morgiana remembered all the jars of oil in the courtyard. "I am sure the merchant would not mind if I took a little of his oil," she thought. "In the morning Ali Baba will be happy to pay him for the small amount I use."



5. As the girl approached the first jar, the robber hiding inside heard her footsteps and thought it was his chief returning. "My arms and legs are so stiff—is it time soon to come out?" the robber asked softly. You can imagine how surprised and frightened Morgiana was to hear the strange voice from inside.

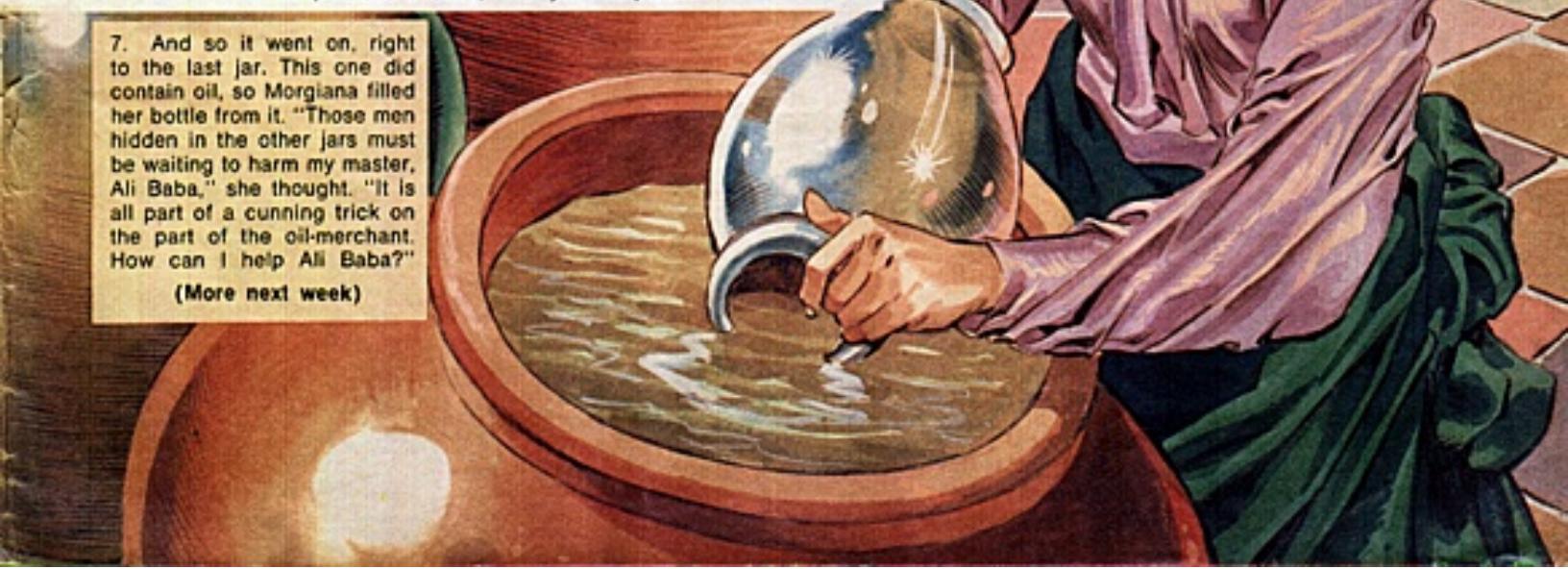


6. But Morgiana was a brave girl. She put her hand to her mouth to check her gasp of surprise, and then she answered in a deep voice, "Not yet, but very soon." Then she went on to the next oil jar. The same whispered question came from it and Morgiana gave the same deep-voiced answer, "Not yet—very soon."



7. And so it went on, right to the last jar. This one did contain oil, so Morgiana filled her bottle from it. "Those men hidden in the other jars must be waiting to harm my master, Ali Baba," she thought. "It is all part of a cunning trick on the part of the oil-merchant. How can I help Ali Baba?"

(More next week)



ALI BABA and the Forty Thieves



1. Morgiana, Ali Baba's serving-maid, had discovered that instead of containing oil, thirty-nine of the forty jars in Ali Baba's courtyard each contained a hidden robber. "These men mean to harm my master," thought Morgiana as she left the courtyard and went back to the house. "They have an evil plan. How can I stop them?"



2. The oil-jars all belonged to the man who was staying as a guest in Ali Baba's house. This man had pretended to be an oil-merchant on his travels, but he was really the leader of the Forty Thieves. By now Morgiana had decided what she must do. "I will put this water on the fire and get it boiling," she said.



3. At last the water became hot enough. Morgiana took it into the courtyard to carry out her plan. She crept quietly to the big oil-jars, whipped the wooden lid off one and swiftly poured in some of the hot water.



4. From jar to jar she went, pouring hot water in every one. The hot water scalded the hidden robbers and the courtyard rang to their cries as they leapt from their hiding places as quickly as they could.



5. The robbers did not wait for any more. Still yelling they ran from Ali Baba's house as fast as they could. The noise of their shouts brought Ali Baba and his guest, the disguised robber chieftain, hurrying to the courtyard. The robber chief frowned in anger when he saw that his men had been discovered.

6. Ali Baba was bewildered. "What is happening?" he asked in great amazement. "Who are all these men?" "They are robbers who were hiding in the oil-jars," replied Morgiana. "They planned to come out when a certain signal was given and I am sure that they meant you great harm, master."



7. "And this man is no oil-merchant," Morgiana went on. "He is the leader of the robbers." She seized the robber chief's false beard and jerked it off. With his men gone, the robber chief was now very frightened. Ali Baba smiled as he watched him run off after his men. "Yes, that is the man who opened the secret cave," he said, "but, thanks to clever Morgiana, I feel sure we shall never again be troubled by the Forty Thieves."

And they never were.

(Next week . . . another tale of Sinbad the Sailor.)

